Humanitarian and Peace Operations: NGOs and the Military in the Interagency Process

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Acknowledgments

Foreword

This report documents the latest in a series of workshops and roundtables organized by the National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) Directorate for Advanced Concepts, Technologies, and Information Strategies (ACTIS). These meetings bring together operators, planners, researchers, and analysts to identify and examine selected aspects of command and control in contemporary Military Coalition Operations and Operations Other Than War (OOTW) and to advance the process of developing one or more Mission Capability Packages (MCPs) to support combined and coalition operations.

ACTIS seeks to improve the state of the art and practice of command and control by undertaking selected research and analysis initiatives and by serving as a bridge among the operational, technical, analytical, and educational communities. The Directorate focuses on emerging requirements and mission areas where new concepts are needed. One of the problem areas identified in ACTIS workshops on peace operations has been that of interagency and civilian-military coordination. In response to this issue, ACTIS held a workshop on 18-19 April 1996 that focused on the interface between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the U.S. Government--particularly the military-- in humanitarian and peace operations.

One of the key findings from the workshop was the recognition by both the NGOs and civilian and military officials that communication needs to be improved between the NGO and U.S. Government communities, especially with the military. As follow-up, ACTIS is supporting a research effort to develop an information system that is low-cost, user-friendly, responsive to the information needs of the Government and the NGO community, and compatible with the needs of the military. NGO representatives have been invited to participate in identifying some of the parameters of this system. Individuals interested in participating in this initiative or other ACTIS-sponsored activities are invited to contact me at (202) 685-2262.

David S. Alberts, Ph.D.
Director, ACTIS

Chapter 1: Purpose of the Workshop

Background

The workshop on Humanitarian and Peace Operations: The NGO/Interagency Interface was held at the National Defense University on 18-19 April 1996, the seventh in a series that explores advanced command relationships. The workshops are sponsored by the Directorate for Advanced Concepts, Technologies, and Information Strategies (ACTIS), which has a charter from The Joint Staff to develop Mission Capability Packages (MCPs) that will support improved joint and combined command and control (C2) for Operations Other Than War (OOTW), including coalition peace operations. In addition to developing MCPs, ACTIS serves as the bridge between the defense-related technical and operational communities, creating opportunities for communication between the two groups.

ACTIS workshops are designed to focus on command and control issues by bringing together select groups of senior analysts and operators to explore a particular issue, operation, or problem.[1] A primary goal is to analyze and improve the linkages between the military operational and technical communities. In the past, participants have included the activities' sponsors (The Joint Staff and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence [C3I]), the individual military services, representatives of the U.S. Unified Commands, other relevant U.S. Government agencies, academics, and private organizations. All ACTIS workshops are conducted on a non-attribution basis and work toward consensus on major issues. Evidence Based Research, Inc. (EBR) acts as rapporteur for the discussions.

During a previous workshop that explored the interfaces of civilian-military communication and planning during *Operation Uphold Democracy* in Haiti, ACTIS determined that the U.S. Government interface with private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) needed to be studied in greater depth. ACTIS convened the seventh workshop in the series to explore the dynamics of the NGO/interagency interface, particularly as it relates to the military, and to search for ways to improve necessary communication between these two very different groups. Discussions in virtually all the prior coalition and peace operations workshops highlighted the key role of NGOs and PVOs. Relations with these organizations are clearly an important determinant of mission accomplishment in many OOTW scenarios. In recognition of the importance of this interface, ACTIS is sponsoring development of a prototype system to exchange information with NGOs and PVOs. This system would facilitate closer coordination by allowing government and NGO participants to exchange information over a global computer network.

The NGO/Interagency workshop was structured to examine and discuss three areas critical to the NGO/U.S. Government interface during humanitarian and peace operations:

- Pre-deployment planning.

- Effective coordination in-country.

- Problems of transition.

The Workshop Participants

The workshop brought together a diverse group of participants from the NGO and U.S. Government communities. Within the government, representatives from the Agency for International Development, the military services, and the Departments of Defense, Justice, and State attended the 2-day workshop.

The NGOs participating in the workshop varied considerably in size and focus of activities. The operating budget of the largest NGO topped $600 million, while the smallest NGO represented had an operating budget of slightly over $1 million. Most of the NGOs were active worldwide, while some were regionally focused.

The participants brought a wealth of experience in the areas of disaster relief and humanitarian and peace operations to the workshop. Their experiences included, but were not limited to, operations in Bosnia, Chad, Haiti, Iraq, Laos, Liberia, the Philippines, Somalia, and Sudan. Workshop participants had engaged in a variety of humanitarian assistance activities in these countries, including refugee resettlement, water purification, food distribution, provision of medical equipment and services, reconstruction, disease prevention, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement.

The participants were asked to identify situations in which the two communities worked well together and situations in which working together was difficult for each of these topic areas.

Organizing the discussion around these critical operational areas helped to reveal broad and significant differences among the NGO community, U.S. Government agencies, and the military. Cultural barriers, vast differences in resources, capabilities, and in-country experience, and divergent viewpoints on coordination and the use of technology were quickly identified as obstacles to effective NGO/Interagency interface.

Workshop participants also identified a number of areas where they might cooperate and develop plans and programs to improve their relations and interactions. These ideas and suggestions are discussed in Chapter 5. One of the significant ideas emphasized the need to develop procedures whereby NGOs and U.S. Government entities can train together to improve their understanding of each other. A second theme focused on improving communications between the two communities and within the NGO community itself by developing a networking mechanism to share information, possibly using computer technology. The workshop also touched briefly on the difficult problems of transition and exit strategies.

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+-------------------------------------------------------------------+
|                     Workshop Accomplishments                      |
|                                                                   |
| By bringing together a diverse group of participants with rich    |
| experience in the area of complex humanitarian emergencies, the   |
| workshop:                                                         |
|                                                                   |
| •Provided for an open exchange of ideas and discussion;           |
| •Fostered a better understanding of the capabilities and          |
|    limitations                                                    |
| •of both the military and NGO communities;                        |
| •Endorsed a common goal of better cooperation and coordination    |
|    between                                                        |
| •the communities;                                                 |
| •Identified interest areas that overlap and warrant further       |
|    development;                                                    |
| •Identified interest areas that are widely divergent and limit    |
|    closer                                                          |
| •cooperation;                                                     |
| •Received input and feedback on the application and utility of     |
|    technology                                                      |
| •developments; and                                                |
| •Confirmed interest in continuing the dialogue initiated at the   |
|    workshop.                                                       |
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Overview

This report summarizes the workshop's free-flowing discussion. It does not offer solutions to problems with the NGO/Interagency interface independently of ideas expressed by workshop participants. The rapporteurs have adhered closely to the discussion and observations of workshop participants. The report does seek to reflect individual insights into the specific problems of NGO/military interfaces during humanitarian and peacekeeping operations. Chapter 2 explores the composition and traits of the NGO community in an effort to place NGO participants' comments in context and to identify underlying causes of the apparent divergence between U.S. Government agencies, the military, and the NGO community. Chapter 3 identifies aspects of the interface that have worked well in the past and that serve as the foundation for future improvements. Chapter 4 focuses on the problems confronting NGOs, U.S. Government agencies, and the military when trying to improve their working relationship. Chapter 5 reports the suggestions generated by the workshop participants to enhance communication between the communities and to create systems to foster better coordination, planning, training, and use of technology.

Chapter 2: The Complex Process of Responding to Crisis

When crisis--whether a natural or technological disaster or a complex humanitarian emergency--strikes, the international community increasingly responds with large-scale assistance and, often, military support. This response augments and sometimes temporarily substitutes for an ongoing international effort to promote development and improve the well-being of individuals and societies in developing regions. Both the ongoing development assistance process and disaster relief involve a myriad of national government and international organizations and entities from around the world. In addition, hundreds of NGOs serve as the implementing agents of official organizations or pursue their own independent development missions in-country. During a period of crisis many of these organizations, particularly the development organizations, will reduce their presence or shift their emphasis, while relief organizations will increase their level of activity.
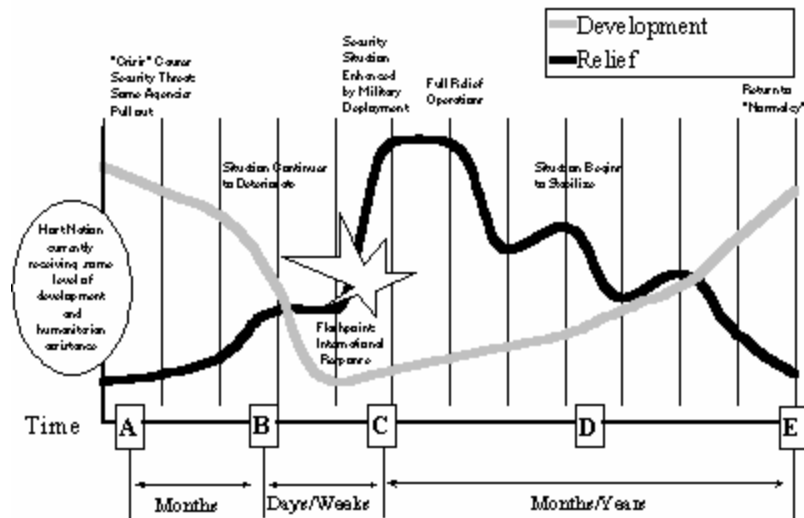

Disaster Typology

There are three main types of international disasters for which the international community will mobilize to provide assistance: natural disasters, technological disasters, and complex humanitarian emergencies.

- Natural Disasters are life-threatening events that include floods, typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, epidemics, famine, and fire. An example is the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone.

- Technological Disasters are manmade and include such events as chemical spills, radiological releases, and oil spills. The 1986 reactor disaster at Chernobyl is one example of this type of disaster.2

- Complex Humanitarian Emergencies are defined by the UN as "humanitarian crisis in a country or region where there is total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal and/or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency."3

Each type of disaster has distinct characteristics that determine the appropriate management response and priorities of action for both the immediate emergency and recovery phases.

The complex lines of responsibility and overlapping and diverging missions of these many organizations make coordinating the international response particularly difficult. Nevertheless, that is precisely what responding nations, the United Nations, and the NGO/PVO community are called upon to do in order to alleviate the crisis as quickly as possible, save lives, and return to stability. In principal, coordination of disaster response occurs through the local government, but during a crisis, or if the government is weak or failing, international agencies will bolster or substitute for local authority. Figure 1 depicts the process of shifting priorities and changing actors that occurs as a disaster response evolves.

Figure 1. The Relief - Development Continuum

Legend: Development; Relief

Labels on figure:
- "Crisis" Cause / Security Threat / Some Agencies Pull out
- Security Situation Enhanced by Military Deployment
- Full Relief Operations
- Return to "Normalcy"
- Situation Continues to Deteriorate
- Situation Begins to Stabilize
- Host Nation currently receiving some level of development and humanitarian assistance
- Flashpoint International Response

Time axis markers: A B C D E

Time spans: Months | Days/Weeks | Months/Years

Prior to the crisis and as it unfolds (Figure 1, Time A), some level of national and international development activities involving both international agencies and NGOs is very likely taking place. As the political, economic, or security situation deteriorates and long-term development activities become more difficult or impossible to pursue, some of these organizations withdraw or reduce their presence (Time B). Others shift their emphasis to relief efforts. The situation may deteriorate further until generating a demand for emergency international response. When the local government requests assistance or the international community, usually acting through the United Nations, decides to respond to the crisis, a massive, focused, and temporary international response, backed by military logistic and security support, takes place (Time C to D). The international community's goal in disaster response is to ameliorate the crisis and stabilize the situation as quickly as possible (Time D) so that development efforts can continue (Time E). The actual transition process may take months or years, a fact that is often not contemplated in contingency planning.

The NGO Community: Global, Diverse, Multifaceted

NGO or PVO?

NGOs and PVOs support or lead long-term development and relief efforts throughout the world. Most of their work is focused on developing nations.

According to The Code of Conduct, sponsored by the ICRC and other international NGOs, non-governmental organizations are organizations, both national and international, which are constituted separate from the government of the country in which they are formed.

PVOs, as defined by USAID, are tax-exempt, non-profit organizations working in international development that receive some portion of their annual revenue from the private sector (demonstrating their private nature) and receive voluntary contributions of money, staff time, or in-kind support from the general public (demonstrating their voluntary nature). Not all non-profit organizations are necessarily PVOs.4

While the term PVO tends to be a U.S. usage, the term NGO is used internationally and increasingly is the generic reference term for the community as a whole. In this report we have adopted this convention, and refer to the private response community as NGOs.

From the outset of the workshop, it was clear that the NGO community is quite diverse. The differences among NGOs themselves are so vast that attempts to group them together as one community are nearly impossible. Differences include organizational structures, size and origin of resources, national ties, focus of activities, as well as access to and use of technology.

Organizational Structures. The International Humanitarian Assistance community can be divided into roughly four components: UN agencies and other public international organizations, private international organizations, donor agencies, and individual NGOs.

- **UN Agencies and Other Public and International Organizations.** The UN emergency/management apparatus, reorganized and streamlined in 1992, has humanitarian, development, political, and security components. On the humanitarian side, the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA) is responsible for mobilizing and coordinating the collective efforts of the international community (particularly the UN System) to meet human needs in disasters and emergencies in a coherent and timely manner and to facilitate the smooth transition from relief to development. Other UN humanitarian agencies include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Program (WFP). These agencies respond to specific emergencies at the direction of the Security Council and member countries. The UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) are the UN's development organizations, dealing with long-term humanitarian issues, but generally not relief

efforts. All of these programs work both with their own staff and with individual NGOs that implement UN programs in the field. The UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) follows political developments worldwide, so as to provide early warning of impending conflicts and analyze possibilities for preventive action by the UN. The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) was greatly expanded in 1992 to include monitoring, planning, and support of operations. It also serves as the Secretary General's military staff. UNDPKO is responsible for the military, civilian police, and electoral components of a complex mission. Other public international organizations in this category include a number of regional government organizations such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization of American States (OAS), or sub-regional groups like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which today is active in Liberia. Like the UN agencies, these international organizations are characterized by their special status as legal entities under some tenets of international law.

- **Private International Organizations.** Private international organizations include worldwide and regional institutions involved in humanitarian missions such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the League of Red Cross, and Red Crescent Societies. These organizations operate around the world independently of any government, and also enjoy special status as legal entities under international law.

- **Donor Agencies.** Donor agencies are primarily national government funding organizations that provide official resources for development and relief. The principal donor agencies represent national governments directly or indirectly and include the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Canada's International Development Agency (CIDA), Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the U.K.'s Overseas Development Agency (ODA), and the European Community Humanitarian Organization (ECHO), which coordinates the efforts of several European Community government agencies. The World Bank and regional development banks are also counted among the donor agencies responding to the guidance of their multiple members. While the banks do not play a role in relief efforts, they are increasingly seeking ways to be responsive during reconstruction.

- **Individual NGOs.** There are thousands of NGOs operating around the world. Some, like the International Rescue Committee (IRC), World Vision, Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE), Christian Children's Fund, Save the Children, and Catholic Relief Services, are registered in the United States and conduct their missions overseas. Others, like Oxford Famine Relief (OXFAM) and Medicin sans Frontiers (Doctors Without Borders), operate out of other developed countries and have activities around the world. Still other NGOs are indigenous to the countries where relief and development needs exist. NGOs differ in size, resources base, thematic and geographic focus of activities, and access to and use of technology, among other things.

Resources. In addition to the national and international dimensions of NGOs, organizations vary by the size of their resource bases. Some NGOs are quite large (e.g., CARE's total support and revenue top $450 million), while many others have operating budgets of less than $10,000. The origin of funding can vary greatly from NGO to NGO, but is comprised of:

Public Resources--grants and contracts from donor government agencies and international organizations; and

Private Resources--contributions from individuals, religious groups, communities, foundations, and businesses, in the form of money or gifts-in-kind.

How Do NGOs Tap U.S. Government Resources?

USAID is responsible for the coordination of the U.S. Government response to international emergencies, including the allocation of government resources to those in the NGO community who have met fiscal accountability requirements and have registered with USAID. USAID/NGO collaboration ensures the continuum of short-term relief and longer-term development.

Within USAID, three offices in the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) serve as the central points of contact: the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (OPVC), the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), and the Office of Transition Initiative (OTI). OPVC carries out programs aimed at enhancing the impact of USAID/NGO collaboration by strengthening NGOs' planning and management capabilities. Since 1988, the annual foreign assistance appropriation legislation has contained a provision stipulating that none of the funds appropriated under the Foreign Assistance Act may be made available to any NGO that is not registered with USAID. Both U.S. and non-U.S. NGOs may register with USAID. Disaster assistance funding and funding through subgrants or contracts are not subject to this requirement.5

In situations formally declared disasters by the U.S. Ambassador in-country, USAID's OFDA is the focal point for assessing the situation and reviewing and approving requests for assistance. OFDA sends a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) in-country to help identify and prioritize overall relief needs, to recommend relief activities that can best be addressed by the U.S. Government, and to review and fund any NGO/IO/UN proposals for relief activities. OFDA disperses its funds through contracts with NGOs. Decisions to award grants are made on a case-by-case basis. OFDA plays a critical role in fostering communication between the U.S. Government and NGOs, and among NGOs as well, in a disaster situation. NGOs may also receive funds through other U.S. agencies, like the Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, and from UN agencies funded in part by U.S. appropriated funds. For more information on OFDA's role in disaster relief, see Appendix C.

Most NGOs depend on a combination of public and private funding. However, some NGOs decline to accept funding from government agencies so as not to be compromised by specific government policy interests. Like their budgets, NGO personnel rosters vary according to budgets and mission. Larger NGOs have a greater ability to respond to unexpected contingencies because of their resource base.

Focus of Activities. NGOs also vary by mission. Individual NGOs typically have very focused purposes. They may seek to promote sustainable economic development through projects in agriculture, trade, small business development and so forth, or foster improved infant and maternal health, control disease, provide food, or expand access to education. A number of NGOs focus on human rights, election monitoring, and conflict resolution. NGOs generally are committed to building the capacities of their indigenous partners in the field, and often work at the grassroots level rather than with central government agencies. Their programs usually emphasize the need to enable people to assume

responsibility for their own affairs. Many NGOs have worked on projects in individual countries for many years. In several workshops, NGO representatives have emphasized that others--the U.S. Government and the military--must understand that they are "there for the long term...," before the crisis and after.

Technology. According to NGO representatives at the workshop, the level of technology employed by an NGO is dependent upon the size of the organization and its operating situation. Because these largely voluntary organizations operate on small budgets and seek to expend the bulk of their resources on in-country programs, little money is budgeted for technology. As such, many of the NGOs--especially the smaller ones--use older generation computers, communication devices, and software, and lack the up-to-date technologies common to most American business or government offices. Some of the larger NGOs, however, possess modern systems and can afford upgrades in technology.

Workshop participants pointed out that their mission frequently is not enhanced (and can sometimes be impeded) by technology. When conflict is raging in the areas in which the NGOs are operating, computers and other items of value - four-wheel drive vehicles, satellite dishes, etc.- are frequently stolen or may make NGO personnel vulnerable to attack. In addition, in the remote areas of NGO operations, such as the interior of Zaire, establishing communication links or accessing a reliable source of electricity is often impossible. Consequently, NGOs are reluctant to look toward technological "quick fixes." Moreover, because of the grassroots nature of NGO work, these organizations need to blend with the local community, which is typically "low- or no-tech." Several NGO representatives also commented that their use of sophisticated communications technology could raise concerns within the host government, particularly if that government did not have similar access to technology or if it involves communications with the U.S. military.

Common Characteristics: Sharing the Same Goals

Despite extreme differences in funding and organization, NGOs share a common culture. InterAction, a coalition of more than 150 NGOs engaged in humanitarian efforts, characterizes this culture as:

- *Independent.* NGOs are focused on their mission and, working with their donors, will figure out the best way to achieve their goals. They tend to develop their plans and programs independently of other organizations, tailoring their efforts to their resource constraints and the needs identified in-country.

- *Decentralized.* NGOs are usually not organized along hierarchical lines. NGOs place greater emphasis on a large number of workers, not managers. Authority is delegated downward, giving maximum flexibility to individuals operating in the field.

- *Committed.* NGOs believe in making a long-term commitment to a situation. Their goal is to achieve an end-state, not an exit strategy. As such, they focus on

programs that deal with problems and issues that are difficult to tackle, take time (perhaps decades), and whose progress may be all but impossible to measure in the short term.

- *"Hands-On."* NGOs value field experience for their personnel. Because of pressing needs and time constraints, training frequently occurs "on-the-job" as make-shift remedies addressing immediate needs are created on-site. Additionally, NGOs seldom use field manuals to guide their work - field experience is seen as the greater teacher. (InterAction's complete brief on the characteristics of the NGO community is included in Appendix A.)

The workshop participants emphasized that, because of their commitment to a long-term relationship in-country, NGOs are very concerned about maintaining neutrality, including the appearance of neutrality. The *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations in Disaster Relief,* which provides guidance on standards of behavior for NGOs, illustrates the commitment NGOs have toward operating independently of any government:[6]

- NGOs are "agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy."

- NGOs will "never knowingly--or through negligence--allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military, or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments."

- "Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint. Humanitarian aid will be given according to the needs of individuals, families, and communities." (See Appendix B for the full text of the *Code of Conduct.*)

NGOs believe that their neutrality and independence from government policies enables them to better perform their missions. Moreover, their ability to carry out their programs in-country ultimately depends upon the willingness of the host country or different parties to a conflict to allow them to do so. Consequently, any perceptions that an NGO is violating its neutral stance could jeopardize its programs.

Despite the NGO community's staunch independent nature, NGOs are learning to work more closely together to achieve common goals. NGOs established an NGO coordinating committee for the first time in Thailand during the Cambodia refugee crisis.[7] The model was copied in Northern Iraq, where the community point of contact proved critical for coordination with both civilian and military organizations. NGOs have gradually begun to coordinate their efforts more closely in subsequent emergencies.

Interagency Interface in Disaster Response

As international community responses to complex humanitarian emergencies have grown more frequent, and the number of official agencies and NGOs responding to crises have burgeoned, the organizational complexity of the response process has grown geometrically. This trend has tremendous implications for command and control and interagency interface on the ground. Figure 2 is an effort to capture the dynamic complexity of organizational relations in disaster response and also to depict the intricate lines of communication and reporting responsibilities of both the civilian and military communities.

Figure 2. Responding to a Complex Humanitarian Emergency
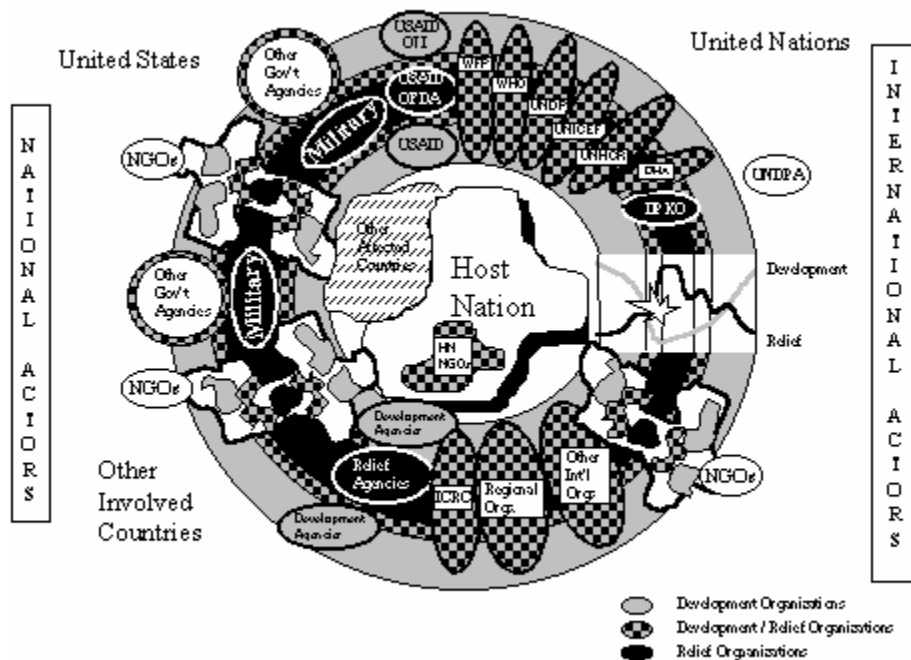
To understand the complexities captured in the figure, one needs to view the situation by examining "organizational slices of the pie." As a starting point, the **host nation** --the central focus of relief activities--will possess some government capability that affects the relief process in most cases. Where government is effective, most NGOs operating in the host nation are authorized to be there by the host government and will seek to retain a positive relationship with that government. The host government also works closely with international actors in coordinating the relief response.

Although most practitioners in complex humanitarian emergencies refer to the **NGO community** as if it were a monolith, each NGO remains committed to its particular mission. Figure 2 illustrates the diversity of the NGOs--their differing sizes, mission orientations, and resource capabilities--by depicting them with contrasting sized, shaped, and shaded figures in the NGO arenas. Clearly, communication among these differing entities becomes complex. Because most NGOs depend on donor funding for their

activities, they must be responsive to their own headquarters, the host country, and to the external funding agencies. The situation is complicated further by the fact that the donor(s) may be a national government, an international organization or agency, or both. These **donor agencies** --particularly national government agencies--may have different political reasons for their involvement in development or relief efforts. Donors collaborate with each other, but do not always share information or achieve consensus on their full range of activities. Also, donors may cooperate well at the national government level, but have greater difficulty collaborating in the field. Both governments and NGOs sometimes complain that donors should "keep better tabs" on those NGOs using donor resources or operating under a donor's national flag.

International organizations present yet another layer of complexity because they operate under a different set of rules than do national organizations. UN organizations function with relative autonomy, particularly in non-crisis periods, but are subject to the constraints of the collective mandate of the Security Council during a crisis and are very sensitive to host country preferences. Within a host nation, a UN Special Representative, who reports to the UN Secretary General, will be the chief point of contact for all UN organizations responding to the crisis and will be the focal point for UN communications, however, he will not have the authority to command the various organizations. In addition to the UN, regional government organizations, like the OAU or the OAS, may station individuals or operate programs in-country. Their reporting responsibilities flow back to the regional organization's headquarters and from there to country members.

One of the principal actors in any disaster, the Red Cross Community, maintains a wholly independent set of relationships with the host nation and other NGOs. Like other international organizations, the unique capabilities and linkages this group of organizations already has established in-country allows it to respond quickly and effectively in many cases. It frequently strives to maintain good communications with the other actors involved in disaster situations.

In responding to disaster, **the military,** supporting national and international peacekeeping or relief efforts, often gets involved in a crisis after many of the other actors are already present and active in the relief process. Operations to protect Kurds in Northern Iraq, where the military arrived first, were an exception to the general experience. Other recent crises, such as Somalia or Rwanda, have presented unique challenges, and both civilian and military authorities have had to improvise to respond appropriately. Lessons learned have been incorporated into subsequent planning efforts, but the unique circumstances of each situation inevitably present unforeseen challenges to planning, coordination, communication, and implementation of the strategy.

The military's primary missions in disaster response are to establish security and make it possible for relief organizations to operate. Carrying out these missions may require the military to first establish a secure environment, then to provide transportation, communication, and/or security for the NGOs as well as for the military force itself. A secondary mission is to assist in creating conditions that will permit the host nation to return to normalcy. This mission is often more controversial than the first, given that it requires the military to perform duties outside of its primary responsibility of ensuring a

secure environment. Primary and secondary missions are often blurred in complex emergencies such as Somalia or Bosnia. In several NDU workshops, NGOs have observed that it is important for the military to consult with NGOs and donors already on the ground before undertaking action so as not to disrupt ongoing activities. At the same time, NGOs seek to remain independent and neutral in their dealings with the military. The NGOs' ongoing relationship with local grassroots organizations and their commitment to their unique missions make it difficult to create and apply a single set of rules to govern NGO relations with military organizations and government representatives. This is the heart of the dilemma confronting both civilian and military organizations as they seek to develop a more coordinated and cooperative approach for responding to complex humanitarian emergencies. This process is described in detail in *The U.S. Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions,* for which the author interviewed many of the actors in NGOs, Government, and military, in recent complex humanitarian emergencies.[8]

Chapter 3: Successful Aspects of the NGO/Military Interface

As U.S. Government agencies, especially the military, have become more involved in complex humanitarian emergencies, the need to interact with NGOs has grown. *Operation Provide Comfort,* the 1991 operation to provide humanitarian relief to Kurds in northern Iraq, was a watershed in NGO/Interagency cooperation. It marked the first time that government agencies, NGOs and the military, despite different methods and motivations, worked so closely together in pursuit of a common goal. Since the experience in Iraq, there have been complex humanitarian emergency responses in Liberia, Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Zaire, and Bosnia. NGOs, many of which have traditionally been involved in long-term development work, are placing increased emphasis on emergency relief, especially in complex humanitarian emergencies. For example, during the Kurdish crisis in 1991, 28 NGOs were involved in providing humanitarian aid. In Somalia, the number grew to 78. In Rwanda, 170 NGOs were involved, while in Haiti, over 400 NGOs--including local or indigenous organizations-- were on the ground when the U.S. troops landed. In the ongoing conflict in Bosnia, the workshop participants estimated that more than 400 NGOs--large and small, international and indigenous--are active. As the scope, frequency, and size of complex humanitarian emergencies increase, the body of knowledge on how to make these operations successful has increased as well. The following discussion highlights those areas of cooperation where significant gains were reported by workshop participants.

Planning

Workshop participants considered Haiti's *Operation Uphold Democracy* a model of effective planning. The Haiti operation marked the first time the U.S. Government organized to develop an interagency political-military plan of operations prior to undertaking a crisis response.[9] OFDA, and through it, the NGO community, was brought into the Government's and the military's planning process at a relatively early stage. The interagency political-military planning effort reflected lessons learned in previous disaster responses, beginning with *Operation Provide Comfort* in northern Iraq. While this represents considerable progress in interagency coordination, as one participant observed, "it was a long time coming!"

Coordination

The experiences in Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, and Rwanda have proven that closer coordination among NGOs and the military can more effectively serve the goal of delivering humanitarian assistance in complex humanitarian emergencies. A variety of organizations now serve as coordinating mechanisms between government/international organization representatives, the military, and NGOs, among NGOs themselves, and between NGOs and the military. Most of these organizations originated from the experiences of *Operation Provide Comfort,* and were later built upon in the early stages of humanitarian relief to Somalia (*Operation Provide Relief*).

Figure 3 depicts the general pattern of coordination among the UN agencies, donor agencies, NGOs, and the military that has evolved in recent experience. The UN is generally the principal agency coordinating the international community's response, and as such assumes a preeminent role in integrating the activities of different donors, NGOs working in-country, the UN's own agencies and other donors, and the military supporting the operation. A variety of structures have evolved to facilitate coordination across these national, organizational, and cultural boundaries. They may have different names and may be more or less physically separate depending on the operation, but they fulfill the essential task of providing a coordination venue for donors, NGOs, and the UN on the one hand, and the military and the various civilian agencies on the other.

Figure 3. Coordination Structures
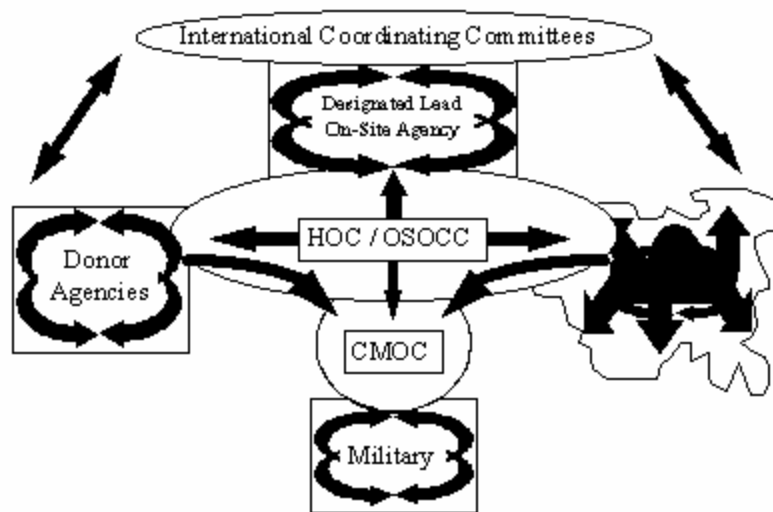
In Figure 3, the mechanism for coordinating between "official" entities (national governments and UN agencies) and the NGO community is the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC), which first appeared in Somalia. The same function was performed by the On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC) in Rwanda and a Humanitarian Affairs Center (HAC) in Haiti. In these past operations, the HOC/OSOCC organizations have been run by the relief operation's Humanitarian Coordinators (civilian UN staff members representing the designated lead agency), and they have coordinated the entire relief effort. As an interface coordinating the requirements of the host nations, NGOs, military, government agencies, UN agencies, and international organizations, HOC/OSOCC functions have included:

- Developing and overseeing the overall humanitarian assistance strategy.

- Coordinating logistics support for the various relief agencies.

- Arranging U.S. and coalition military support.

- Monitoring the delivery of humanitarian assistance assets through various NGO, UN agencies, and IOs.

As emergency responses have become more frequent and more complex, the NGO community has increasingly found it necessary to coordinate among itself and to provide a point of contact or points of contact to official entities. NGOs first organized their own intracommunity coordination center in northern Iraq. Confronted with overwhelming difficulties and absent strong international organization leadership, coordination and communication among the usually independent NGOs became a necessity. The NGO Coordinating Committee for Northern Iraq (NCCNI) was established, and subsequently became the prime interface for NGOs with the official community and the military.

The Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC) also had its origins in *Operation Provide Comfort.* After an initial reluctance to work together and overcoming "cultural" biases, the NGO and military communities began to recognize the comparative advantages offered by the other, and an informal, amorphous relationship emerged in which "information was the currency of exchange." [10] Through coordination, the military gained efficiency and economy of effort from the NGOs, and the NGOs received logistical support, security, and information from the military and from other NGOs. In *Operation Restore Hope,* a CMOC was collocated with the UN's HOC, and worked very well. [11]

Since *Operations Provide Comfort* and *Provide Relief,* the CMOC concept--providing a vehicle for the military and NGO community to interface--has been developed into doctrine by the U.S. military. A CMOC provides the primary interface between U.S. military forces and the various agencies involved in a humanitarian relief operation. It is a military organization that functions to: (1) monitor military support throughout the area of operations, and (2) respond to UN, NGO, and IO logistic, security, and/or technical support requirements as tasked to the military in the mission/mandate for each specific operation.

Although they share many characteristics, each humanitarian relief operation is unique, and the CMOC structure will be tailored for each situation. Currently, multinational activities supporting *Operation Joint Endeavor* in Bosnia work through CIMIC Centers-- Civil-Military Cooperation Centers--to accomplish the same type of objectives as the U.S.-developed CMOC. Specific CMOC/CIMIC Center functions may include:

- Screening, validating, and coordinating NGO, UN, and IO requests for military support. This is accomplished in conjunction with the DART, if it is activated.

- Explaining military policies to NGOs, UN, and IO agencies, and conversely, explaining NGO, UN, and IO policies to the military force established to coordinate the emergency response. Explicit discussion of what the military will and will not do is the most crucial of these explanations, according to workshop participants.

- Convening mission planning groups when complex military support or numerous military units and NGOs, UN agencies, and IOs are involved.

- Providing security information to and responding to emergency requests from NGOs, UN agencies, and IOs.

The CMOC also serves as the military representation in the HOC/OSOCC. In this capacity, the CMOC provides liaison and coordination between the military capabilities and the needs of the relief agencies, validates NGO requests for military assistance to the military hierarchy, and provides a conduit for information flow - all serving to further consensus building for the mission. NGO workshop participants mentioned certain services coordinated by the CMOC as particularly useful, including:

- Daily security briefings provided by the military;

- Security for convoys;

- General security and safety, including emergency response;

- Sector planning, coordination, and classification of different participants' mandates;

- Technical assistance, including communications and small machine repair; and

- Access to critical facilities under military control, such as ports and airfields.

In sum, this requirement was of greatest importance when the response to the crisis was multinational or was sponsored under a UN mandate but was important in U.S.-only operations like Haiti, as well. CMOCs have been viewed by both the military and NGO communities as "helpful in furthering operational level coordination and communication." Workshop participants from the NGO community also emphasized the importance of the above organizations operating "outside the wire" (the military security perimeter), and highlighted the critical role that OFDA has played in facilitating communications both between NGOs and the U.S. military.

Finally, while the CMOC provides the vehicle for the military to support NGO and government agency responses to a complex humanitarian emergency, all workshop participants emphasized that mission success or failure depends on the character of the **political** as well as the **military** commitment to the enterprise. Successful resolution of the crisis requires collaboration across the political and military spectrum.

Communication

All the workshop participants recognized the important role of communication between NGOs, Government agencies, and the military during complex humanitarian emergencies, particularly the importance of a liaison or designated point of contact within the communities. NGO participants expressed high praise for OFDA and its role in

disaster relief. They see OFDA as critical to effective communication between NGOs and the U.S. Government, as well as among NGOs themselves. One military participant, having experienced great frustration with the difficulty of distributing information to the myriad of NGOs, found that InterAction--a loose coalition of more than 150 NGOs engaged in humanitarian efforts around the world--was an "effective conduit for funneling information to the appropriate NGOs." OFDA has established an umbrella agreement with InterAction to include information sharing. OFDA also has a representative assigned to the CINCPAC (Commander-in-Chief Pacific) staff who, according to one participant, has made a significant contribution by helping the military understand the idiosyncrasies of interactions with both U.S. and non-U.S. NGOs. Several NGOs supported the notion that OFDA be designated as the official U.S. Government point of contact with the NGO community. On the international level, the Geneva-based International Committee of Voluntary Organizations (ICVO) provides coordination among NGOs on a global basis.

Training

Workshop participants identified several initiatives in the training area that have helped foster better relations between NGOs and U.S. Government civilian and military agencies. Both types of organizations must deal with complications created by personnel changes and the need to keep training requirements current. Several participants cited the **Army's Joint Readiness Training Center** at Ft. Polk, Georgia, which conducts training exercises in OOTW for the forces. As part of this training, the Center incorporates information about working with the NGO community into its program. In addition, the Center has included members of the NGO community in its field exercises. This ongoing effort was established approximately 5 years ago.

The American Red Cross has been active in training with the military for years, building on the special relationship that it maintains with the U.S. armed forces. The Red Cross has signed Statements of Understanding with both the Department of Defense and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These agreements delineate each organization's responsibilities in disaster preparedness planning and in operations in the event of a national emergency or disaster. They also outline areas of mutual support and cooperation, and pave the way for similar cooperative agreements in the future. Currently, the Red Cross is conducting a course in collaboration with the University of Hawaii, Tripler Army Medical Center on behalf of the U.S. Pacific Command. This course addresses international disaster management and humanitarian assistance requiring civil-military operations. On a global scale, the ICRC works with OFDA on developing training programs.

Chapter 4: Difficult Aspects of the NGO/Military Interface

While the comments captured in Chapter 3 highlight the advances made in developing NGO/military interfaces, many observations by workshop participants indicated that those efforts are only a beginning. Considerable work still needs to be done in all of the areas cited in previous chapters--planning, coordination, communication, and training--in order that civilian organizations, the military, and NGOs can work more effectively together. This chapter focuses on the problems identified by the workshop participants.

Same Country--Different Worlds

The vastly different objectives and perspectives the NGO and military/government communities bring to a complex humanitarian emergency are among the most pervasive problems confronting both communities. As Figure 1 in Chapter 2 illustrated, the NGO community has usually been involved in relief and development activities in the given country long before that country's internal condition gains the attention of the international community. The evolving crisis prevents the NGOs from carrying out their mission. As the situation deteriorates and the international community contemplates response, the military commences planning its response. When political authority determines to deploy military force to stabilize and provide security for humanitarian operations, it usually provides the armed forces with a limited mission and, often, limited time frame in which to complete the mission. Once in the field, the military mission--provide security to the overall operation--and the NGO mission--to carry out specific relief activities and return to normalcy--may clash. Both communities have a common goal in their response to the complex humanitarian emergency: stabilization of the situation and a return to normalcy, but have different perspectives on how the goal is to be achieved and how long it will take.

Figure 4 compares the different perspectives of the military and the NGO community as they approach the complex humanitarian emergency response. The figure roughly tracks the time periods of evolution of the crisis that were described in Figure 1. At Time B, as the situation deteriorates, the international community's political leaders monitor events and, increasingly, are called on to respond, providing assistance and security so that relief can be administered. The NGO community sees its efforts increasingly impeded by lack of stability/security and often joins in the call for international response. At Time C, military forces are deployed with a specific mission to provide a secure environment so that the NGO community and other responding agencies can continue operations and resume their individual organization missions. At this point, military and NGO goals are similar, but the means by which the common ends are achieved often put the two groups at odds. The military's first priority is stabilization and security. This often requires (and the military must be prepared for) use of decisive force. As it moves in, the military concentrates on establishing its own forces in secure areas and does not begin to extend its security umbrella to others until that has been accomplished. Moreover, following the tragic loss of life in Somalia, force protection has been a major concern to the military commander. In contrast, the NGOs' first priorities are to renew the humanitarian and development activities halted by the chaos and violence. NGOs want the security

provided by the military force, but chafe at the accompanying constraints on their own movements. NGO expectations regarding the military's role in providing security for their operations may not be realistic if they do not fully understand or appreciate the military's mission, doctrine, or approach to the use of force. In some situations, NGOs at the workshop felt that the security provided by the military constrained their movements in-country and their ability to accomplish their mission. In addition, the NGO's focus on a desired end-state and the military's emphasis on a limited mission and successful exit strategy provide further opportunities for misunderstanding.

Figure 4. Different Perspectives on Complex Humanitarian Emergency

	Situation stabilization is the common goal, but for different reasons	
	Through the Eyes of the Military	**Through the Eyes of the NGOs**
A		– NGOs conduct field operations in accordance with organizational objectives
B	– A deteriorating situation warrants monitoring	– A deteriorating situation prevents normal field operations, but work continues within the unstable environment
	– Situation deteriorates further. Public pressure for international response. Political authority determines to commit US forces.	– The situation deteriorates to point that conditions prevent operations - international assistance desired
C	– Military deploys in force to "create a secure environment." – Military priority: security/force protection – Military seeks to coordinate NGOs to more effectively carry out missions.	– NGO priority: continue operations; maintain independence – NGOs concerned that military wants to "take charge" and control NGOs; perception that military footprint is too large
D	– Military assists in reconstruction - conscious that it must prevent civil sector from becoming dependent on military – Relative stability achieved, military withdraws	– NGOs resume operations under more secure conditions created by the military. Take advantage of unique military assets
E		– The NGO mission continues

Despite the divergent focus of efforts, understanding of each community's "division of labor" has been realized in past operations. With a secure environment created by the military, the NGOs are able to resume limited operations (Time D). These efforts often take advantage of unique military capabilities and assets (excess defense articles, transport and heavy equipment availability) and serve to re-build the infrastructure within the country. As the overall situation continues to improve, the military deployment is no longer required and the forces withdraw (Time E), leaving the NGOs to resume their operations under close to pre-crisis conditions.

Planning

One of the weaknesses of the NGO/military interface involves planning. In some cases, NGO workshop representatives complained that U.S. Government or UN objectives are unclear, hampering planning efforts. They cited as examples the U.S. participation in Liberia and in the relief efforts following the Rwanda crisis. Complaints were levied at the UN as well. One participant noted that the UN Security Council does not always spell out its objectives, leading to confusing responses by both governments and NGOs

working with it. An experienced ambassador pointed out that, because of unique domestic political considerations, member states sometimes prefer that the UN not be too definitive when identifying its objectives. This allows each country to tailor its response to a situation. This lack of clarity, however, complicates the planning process for all involved, including NGOs.

Generally speaking, the U.S. Ambassador in-country is the focal point for getting the process going. The government of the country where disaster occurs will request assistance from the United States. Once the Ambassador declares the situation a disaster, the U.S. embassy sets the process in motion with a cable to Washington (see Figure 5). The lead agency in disaster response is USAID/OFDA. OFDA will assess the situation and determine the most appropriate response from the U.S. Government, including providing relief commodities, deploying regional advisors, or a DART team and, finally, funding NGOs to conduct disaster relief in situations where they are needed. OFDA also works with the military in determining how U.S. forces can best support the effort. But real planning among civilian and military agencies remains weak.

Figure 5. U.S. Government Response to Natural Disaster Relief and Complex Emergency Operations: Initiating International Assistance

Many NGO participants raised questions about the process by which the U.S. Government gets involved in disaster relief operations. While some of the participants-- both government and NGOs--were exceptionally well versed in the bureaucratic trappings of crisis/disaster response, others were less well informed. Moreover, despite the straightforward description given at the workshop, many of the participants stated that in their experience, the process was often muddled and the system did not always function smoothly.

NGOs are principally concerned about planning for participation in humanitarian relief aspects of the emergency response, and not with military planning. Until *Operation Uphold Democracy,* the two planning processes were distinct and compartmented.

One participant summed up the root of many problems: "The biggest problem I see is with communication. The NGOs are not consulted about an operation until after the decisions have already been made by the military." Many of the NGO participants expressed similar feelings about the planning, coordination, and communication processes.

The discussion on planning revealed a number of sub-issues that require further development. According to one participant, the planning process is too closed and relevant NGOs "cannot get in the door to participate." Some NGO participants were critical of current U.S. guidance on Government involvement in humanitarian emergencies, as stated in Presidential Decision Directive 25. This was "skewed during the drafting process," they observed, and NGOs did not have an opportunity to provide adequate input to the directive. A new PDD which will address these issues is being contemplated.

Another concern was that NGOs often are asked too late and too infrequently to participate in the planning process, affecting the accurate assessment of root causes and conditions contributing to conflict within a country. One participant maintained that both NGOs and governments need to perform on-the-ground assessments using information from people who live there. "Planning won't work unless you correctly assess the situation." In any case, failure to plan in advance at senior levels of government leaves greater responsibility to the HOC and CMOC coordination efforts on the ground, once all parties are in the field.

Many comments regarding the lack of NGO participation in the government planning process reflected concerns about disruption of established relations by a military presence, particularly by a force whose mission focuses on stability rather than other elements of the crisis. One NGO observed that once the military was involved, the potential for disrupting informal--albeit effective--channels of communication among NGOs in-country was considerable. Participants agreed that it is particularly important that military units that have not had civil affairs training be exposed to these concerns.

Because of the more diffuse NGO approach to their mission, the military participants in the workshop expressed a need for "more complete information on the NGOs" to execute proper planning. Yet, given the independent nature of NGOs and the sheer size of the NGO community--for example, more than 400 NGOs are operating now in Haiti--"there are just too many moving parts--there cannot be much of a coordinated effort. Once you start to try to integrate numerous actors, it gets very complicated," according to another participant. As one NGO representative recognized, the "commander's intent" is critical to any military planning. "If you can't identify the commander--and you can't on the NGO side--this will be a problem." On the other hand, an experienced disaster assistance official observed that "the crisis response challenge is great enough to require everyone's effort. The job is to channel the efforts efficiently."

Coordination

The problem of accurately assessing a situation and its short- and long-term needs was raised in other contexts, as well. The different tasking of relief and development agencies within the U.S. Government was noted, as well as the fact that many NGOs are oriented primarily toward development and not emergency relief. These organizations need to "retool" to carry out a disaster relief role. Other international organizations and NGOs focus principally on relief missions. Several participants observed that accurately assessing the needs of a population in an emergency situation is critical to identifying the most appropriate NGOs to respond to an emergency. Along with making better assessments of a situation, it is necessary to accurately identify NGO capabilities and resources. Both of these tasks fall under the purview of OFDA and the DART team, not the military.

Workshop participants also discussed the idea of developing "score cards" to help make better long-term assessments. One participant identified a NATO program that seeks to identify "normality indicators" to serve as a guidepost for assessing the effectiveness of NATO initiatives in restoring the peace in Bosnia. Some participants felt that such indicators are irrelevant at best and misleading at worst, particularly as the forces responding to a crisis have a profound impact on local conditions. One workshop participant noted that, because local procurement contracts tend to inflate normality indicators, the military's very presence would skew its own indicators and mask real development problems. Several NGOs recognized that the NGO presence also affects local "normality" indicators, though perhaps on a different scale.

On the other hand, some participants indicated that many NGOs are already using indicators of measurements of effectiveness. One participant thought that NGOs take a "more realistic" approach by focusing on tangible indicators, such as tons of food delivered or number of meals served. Another participant suggested that indicators are really more useful at the development end of the relief-development spectrum: "It is premature to develop (indicators) in the early response to a crisis or disaster because it usually takes years for a real impact to be noticeable." These comments reflect the NGOs' long-term commitment to the situation and their philosophy that almost any action is a positive step toward long-term goals.

NGO workshop participants added that, in addition to trying to coordinate among the various U.S. NGOs, it is necessary to coordinate with the local government and local NGOs. The complexity of the situation on the ground--with many government organizations and NGOs of different nationalities as well as indigenous NGOs--is not readily apparent to planners in Washington. NGO representatives felt that not enough effort is made to coordinate with and support local, indigenous NGOs who are already on the ground and working effectively.

Despite the call for common structures for planning, communication, and implementation, many of the participants recognized that cultural barriers impede coordination. Many NGOs do not favor the military's standardized way of approaching a problem, believing that it diminishes flexibility, which NGOs view as their strength.

Participants generally agreed that even if a logical structure for coordination and planning could be developed, the "NGOs do not necessarily want a planning structure imposed on them," and thus their desire for early and meaningful involvement in the planning process.

Problems of coordination with diffuse authority are not confined to the NGO community. Many participants--NGO, military, and U.S. Government--commented on the conflicts among U.S. Government agencies involved in humanitarian and peace operations.

- One participant alluded to the internal "turf" battles during the crisis in Rwanda, referring to jockeying for position between different bureaus of the State Department, USAID, and the NSC, and asked rhetorically, "How does this confusion affect the NGOs?"

- Another participant observed that military commanders may talk with each other (e.g., in video teleconferences), but may not coordinate with their staffs, who are the primary interface with the NGOs. If this happens, communication can break down, or appear to break down, within the military system.

- Several participants pointed to the competition among the NATO CIMIC Centers in Bosnia as increasing the confusion among NGOs as to who is in charge of what. For example, there appears to be overlap among the CIMIC Centers located in the individual French, U.K., and U.S. sectors and the two Sarajevo-based Centers established at IFOR (the Implementation Force for the Dayton Peace Agreement) and ARRC (Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps) headquarters.

- Despite efforts within Washington to coordinate among all the agencies, one participant stated that "the interagency process breaks down at the Unified Command level. The Unified Commands are too inwardly focused."

Organizational conflicts are not limited to the U.S. Government. Participants stated that turf battles occur among UNDP, UNHCR, and other international bodies as well. According to one participant, command and control arrangements among these organizations are "impossible."

Trust among these different organizational cultures was an important concern for both military and NGOs, but especially for the latter. According to a participant, the breakdown of trust is a result of "tensions between the NGOs and the military because they have different objectives." A military peace-enforcement operation may conflict with the humanitarian goals of an NGO. Many NGO participants raised a concern about being too closely associated with the military because of the NGOs' desire to stay neutral in a conflict. They made the point that the local population's or local government's view of the U.S. military or coalition forces greatly affect the success of an operation and accordingly, an NGO's willingness to be associated with the military. In Bangladesh, the local populace had a positive view of the U.S. military role, greatly enhancing the chances of operational success and ensuring a positive NGO response to cooperating with

the military. Clearly, trust will be situation dependent, as well as dependent upon individual NGOs' outlooks.

Communication

Another problem within the NGO/military interface involves the degree of communication. Some NGO participants stated that there exist situations during which an NGO will be reluctant to communicate its plans to the military. The NGOs expressed concern that in the process of sharing their plans with the military, they would be broadcasting their intentions to indigenous armed groups. For example, if the NGOs were preparing to transport supplies in a conflict-torn area, they would want to keep this information tightly held to avoid ambushes and looting.

There also are situations when it is physically impossible for NGOs and the military to communicate. Several participants cited problems of communication interoperability between the communities. Most NGOs operate under the consent of the host government, which allocates communication frequencies. In the case of the Red Cross, frequencies are assigned by the International Telecommunications Union. The UN currently does not share its frequencies with NGOs. Some NGO participants "beg, borrow, and steal" their equipment, which means that their communications "network" is a system patched together with whatever they can find. Another participant commented on the lack of interoperability among U.S. Government agencies. In Haiti, for example, members of the HAC could not contact the CMOC except through satellite communication equipment provided by OFDA.

Communications capability also affects the host government perspective on the NGO-military interface. During discussion of the desirability of communications interoperability, one participant voiced his perception that "the host government gets very suspicious when there is too much interoperability [among the international community or with the military]. NGOs must strictly ensure their neutrality at all times."

Problems of communication are exacerbated by the varying levels of technologies available to different organizations. As mentioned before, the need for and use of technology enhancements vary considerably between the NGO and military communities and within the NGO community itself. Access to technology is affected by resource constraints. Large NGOs, by virtue of their resource base, will be better equipped and have more recent technology than the smaller ones. In contrast to the military's high-tech approach, one participant described much of the NGO community as "very low-tech." "We work in an austere environment. We use old, donated equipment and man it with locals." Another participant added, "The problem with computers is that they get ripped off; there are not many of them; they are in poor repair; and there exist linguistic problems."

Training

Both the NGO and government participants agreed that joint training was a worthy goal that should be addressed, but all the participants acknowledged that shortages of time and

money constrain efforts in this area. According to one participant, "There is not a lack of desire to train...it is simply a lack of resources." Similarly, as evidenced by the debate on planning, both NGOs and the military need to think about how they can incorporate the other community into their training. For example, one participant stated that the military needs to understand the real time and resource constraints under which NGOs operate if it is to effectively incorporate NGOs into its training mission. NGOs cannot afford to send key personnel to extended training exercises like those often carried out in the military.

Chapter 5: Possibilities for Enhancement

"Both sides need to see the situation as 'win-win.' But how do you change the current paradigm that does not track with a win-win approach? Everyone is trying to win, but collectively, you fail."

- Workshop Participant

Crises of all kinds--natural, technological, and complex humanitarian--will continue unabated in the near future. Over the past 10 years, events identified as disasters by USAID/OFDA have averaged about 45 per year and ranged from as few as 33 to as many as 64 in 1996. Moreover, the trends indicate that complex emergencies may actually increase in number in the future. In 1986, OFDA classified three situations as complex emergencies; by 1995, the number had risen to 26. The implications are clear--NGOs, Government agencies, and the military must enhance efforts to coordinate responses to the growing needs created by these events.

But how do you achieve a "win-win" situation when participant goals, missions, and cultures vary greatly? Although workshop attendees expressed many different viewpoints on how to enhance the NGO/Interagency interface, three junctures in the process emerged as critical focal points for further investigation:

- Planning among NGOs and Government agencies in Washington.

- Coordinating operations in the host country.

- Communicating across organizations and distances.

Enhancing the Planning Interface

Workshop participants made numerous suggestions for enhancing joint planning. One participant suggested organizing the most "senior" NGOs into a coordinating committee and having them work out a plan, probably in coordination with the military. This idea addresses the need for NGOs to develop their own plans, as opposed to having the military or government agencies impose a plan on them, while at the same time cutting through the problem of dealing with hundreds of independent NGOs. According to one participant, "You cannot regulate or enforce the NGOs to follow a plan. They must see the clear-cut advantage to following it." By having the NGOs create the plan themselves, the assumption is that the process would be closer to achieving this goal. Another participant added that the coordinating committee could include or be solely comprised of the donor organizations. Because there are far fewer donor agencies than NGOs, it might be simpler to get donors involved in a planning committee.

In the planning process, several NGO participants encouraged the U.S. Government participants to expand their thinking about NGOs and not include just the large, well-known NGOs. The government planning process needs to expand to include the small

NGOs as well. One way to accomplish this task was seen as better education of government planners about the NGO community.

Enhancing Coordination In-Country

Workshop suggestions to enhance in-country coordination ranged from very specific to very broad. What follows is a condensed description of these suggestions.

One of the key points stressed by NGO participants was to make better use of CMOCs, HOCs, and DARTs during a complex emergency. The NGOs encouraged the military to use the DARTs to identify NGO assets and foster communication with the NGO and donor communities. The NGO participants also urged the U.S. Government participants--civilian and military--to make use of the situation reports published by InterAction for its members. These reports describe what the NGOs are doing on the ground, including where they are operating and in what sectors, and provide the names and phone numbers of key contact personnel.

The participants repeatedly stressed the need for fostering closer working relations between HOCs and CMOCs, particularly "outside the wire." For the NGOs, it is important that the military and OFDA work with the NGOs in the HOC and not operate solely out of secure facilities, such as airfields.

Addressing the need to cut down on confusion among U.S. Government agencies, one individual suggested that the CMOCs and the NATO CIMIC Centers use secure video teleconferencing between and among CMOCs or CIMIC Centers in situations where multiple centers are located and used by the U.S. military, the UN, NATO, or other foreign militaries. This would enhance communication by providing a real-time information exchange and forcing a tete-a-tete among the various organizations.

Enhancing Communication Across Organizations

The area of improving communications across organizations and distances encompasses many possibilities, ranging from defining actions and terms to increasing common understanding, to using technology to physically enhance the communication process.

All of the U.S. Government participants expressed a desire to find out more about the NGO community and to develop a central location for information about NGOs. The U.S. Government participants were almost unanimous in their desire to see the NGOs establish a central point of contact within the U.S. Government, for both the U.S. Government agencies and the NGO community to use. OFDA was mentioned as the logical government agency. This suggestion was carried further by some participants urging both the NGO and U.S. Government communities to explore the use of the Internet to facilitate communication.[12]

In a similar vein, many NGOs expressed a desire for the U.S. Government and the military to establish a central point of contact to facilitate communication. It was unclear whether this point of contact would be military or civilian. Some of the participants

suggested that OFDA should be formally designated to fulfill this responsibility. Another suggestion was to publish point of contact information--identifying key players--and distribute it throughout both communities.

One individual pointed to the DoD publication that defines commonly used terms within the defense community. This participant suggested that such a dictionary ensures that all the actors in an operation speak the same organizational "language" in difficult areas, such as peace operations. The suggestion was made that the NGO community develop a similar dictionary of common terms used by NGOs in disaster situations. By sharing such publications, both the NGOs and the military could speak a common language when communicating during disaster situations.

Use of technology was viewed as an issue area where differences between the two communities were great, but the potential payoff in cooperating was just as great. Many NGOs were interested in finding new ways to use current, low-cost technologies to facilitate communication and planning. Almost all of the participants wanted to see the development of a system--relatively unsophisticated and unquestionably inexpensive--to get real-time information from the U.S. Government to the NGOs and vice versa. Despite agreement on developing such a system, the types of inputs were not resolved, nor were questions surrounding collection of the inputs. Other issues, such as system vulnerability and verification of data, were also raised.

Both NGOs and representatives from government organizations recognized that continuing to meet in workshops such as the one held at NDU would foster productive communication between the communities. Many of the participants agreed that meeting face-to-face and discussing differing perspectives helped to increase their understanding of the other community. Specific suggestions for enhancing planning, coordination, and communication emerged in these discussions.

Identifying transition and exit strategies, some participants emphasized the need for both the NGO and government communities to deal more seriously and concretely with the issue of identifying and working toward an "end-state." As part of this planning effort, both NGOs and the military need to start preparing for a role in conflict resolution, particularly given the increased need for complex humanitarian emergency responses. Along similar lines, there is a need to analyze and deal more effectively with the requirements along the relief-development continuum necessary for both communities. This is particularly true as the military formulates its own transition and exit strategies.

Following on the discussion of conflict resolution, one participant suggested establishing a database on NGOs who are currently mitigating entities in conflict situations. Lessons learned by these NGOs could be passed along, particularly as they relate to the difficulties associated with conflict resolution and operating in environments where the "rule of law" no longer exists. Another participant suggested that the military could learn more from NGO "capacity-building" efforts. This individual stated that these NGOs have learned how to use local materials for indigenous reconstruction while minimizing the adverse effect on the local economy. The military could be made aware of these efforts to effectively integrate the local economy in rebuilding communities.

Next Steps

The workshop discussion generated numerous ideas from both NGO and Government participants on ways to enhance joint efforts in complex humanitarian emergencies, but the feasibility of these ideas still must be evaluated. Many of the workshop suggestions were commendable, but difficult to implement at this point in time either because of resource constraints or deep differences among organizations. Other suggestions were within the realm of possibility, but the potential payoff may not justify the effort. Nevertheless, there was general agreement on the part of both NGO and U.S. Government attendees that various forms of joint training could help achieve progress in familiarizing the two communities with each other. In addition, all of the participants wanted to enhance communication and coordination, although their suggestions as to how to do this differed considerably. One method on which there was agreement was to develop an information tool that could serve as the conduit for knowledge, facts, and news among organizations involved in complex humanitarian emergencies.

Training--Fertile Ground for Development. Workshop participants agreed that the training area was one where their interests clearly coincided. One participant suggested that the military create a "traveling road show" that would explain how the military operates in humanitarian and peace operations and would perform outreach training to the NGOs. One individual suggested that the training provided by the military cover how NGOs can gain access to DoD excess property and other detailed issues. The NGOs emphasized that it is important that the military understand the serious time constraints that NGO personnel face in committing to training. In response to this, one participant recommended that the military develop educational videos. These videos, which would cover the same topics as a formal training program, would be a "low-tech" approach that could accommodate the NGOs' need for flexibility in training. Self-learning texts, used alone or in conjunction with the videos, could also accomplish the same goals of fostering understanding among communities while conserving on time.

Another participant suggested that representatives from the military join the annual training events and conferences that InterAction provides to its member NGOs. Others wanted to see the successful joint training at Ft. Polk continue and perhaps be expanded. This would assist the military in developing their understanding of the NGO community and would help bridge cultural gaps between the communities. One participant observed that training in the military should not be restricted to the officer corps. Enlisted personnel need to be educated about NGOs as they are very likely to be the first to encounter NGOs when deployed in the field.

Using Technology to Further Communication. Like training, enhancing communication through technology is a potentially productive approach that could yield high payoffs. Almost all of the workshop participants expressed an interest in seeing the development of an information tool that would allow effective, timely, and efficient communication between communities. As mentioned earlier, ACTIS has funded a pilot project in this area to develop a real-time communication system that can incorporate information relevant to both the NGO community and the military.

Researchers from the U.S. Army Communications and Electronics Command (CECOM) presented a first version of its Coalition Forces C2 Decision-Aids Storyboard for review by participants at the workshop. The storyboard is the product of CECOM work on a set of tools to support the exchange of information and the creation of a common perception of the situation among NGOs and U.S. and coalition military forces. In general, the workshop participants saw utility in the system, and many agreed to work with ACTIS to help tailor the next version, particularly in those aspects related to NGO information requirements. Participants described the desired system as one that

- Is easy to use and accommodates the range of computer sophistication within the NGO community.

- Can support detailed and precise data that is validated by people on the ground during the crisis. One participant commented, "Where are the mines in the mine field? That is the precision we need."

- Can interact with both state-of-the-art and obsolete computers.

- Does not rely on an open system like the Internet, to which many NGOs do not have access and over which they do not believe they could communicate securely with the military.

Building on these ideas, ACTIS will work with CECOM and the NGO community to identify useful data fields and presentation modes. Once an enhanced version of the prototype is developed, ACTIS will review and analyze the efficiency, effectiveness, and simplicity of the system, testing it in user sessions with NGOs and others. ACTIS will also consider the compatibility of the design with military and coalition forces' needs. It is anticipated that this iterative process will be completed by the end of 1996.

In the final analysis, both communities have identifiable obligations to fulfill in order to improve the NGO/Interagency interface. The U.S. Government (especially the military) needs to develop a better understanding of the NGO community--to include NGOs of all sizes and national origins. The military needs to ensure that its programs for supporting NGOs in the field are known to that entire community. The NGO community needs to develop a better understanding of the process by which the U.S. Government gets involved in a disaster response situation and the scope of the roles that the military will play in that process. The ACTIS workshop demonstrated a willingness among all parties to work to resolve obstacles to coordination.

Participation Encouraged. ACTIS invites those individuals and organizations who would like to participate in the endeavor to enhance the NGO/Interagency interface to contact Dr. David S. Alberts, Director of ACTIS, at (202) 685-2262.

End Notes

[1] Each ACTIS workshop to date has built upon the lessons learned from previous sessions. The first workshop focused on identifying unique command and control

requirements and essential functions of coalition peace operations. The second dealt with designing ideal command arrangements for peace operations involving a U.S. combined joint task force, and the third expanded this perspective to include the experience of other Western Hemisphere nations. While the first two workshops looked at the issues from the U.S. perspective only, the third validated concepts and added new insights from an experienced group of senior operators from seven other countries in the Western Hemisphere. The fourth workshop examined OOTW issues and related technologies. Another area identified in the previous workshops that warranted additional study was interagency, civilian, and military organization communication. Hence, the fifth workshop explored interagency relations within the context of *Operation Restore Democracy* in Haiti. Publications from all of these workshops are available from NDU Press, or from ACTIS.

[2] Frederick M. Burkle, Jr. "Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Concepts and Participants," in *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January-March 1995), 55-63.

[3] UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

[4] U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Humanitarian Response, Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, *The AID-PVO Partnership* (Washington, D.C., 1992), 5.

[5] For a full description of AID's interface with the NGO community, see U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Humanitarian Response, Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, *The AID-PVO Partnership* (Washington, D.C., 1992).

[6] The *Code of Conduct* was sponsored by Caritas Internationalis, Catholic Relief Services, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Save the Children Alliance, the Lutheran World Federation, OXFAM, and the World Council of Churches, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

[7] Chris Seiple, *The U.S. Military/NGO Relationship in Humanitarian Interventions* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Center for Strategic Leadership, Peacekeeping Institute, 1966), 47.

[8] Chris Seiple, op cit.

[9] Interagency planning problems associated with *Operation Uphold Democracy*, as detailed in the ACTIS book, *Interagency and Political-Military Dimensions of Peace Operations: Haiti ~ A Case Study*.

[10] See Chris Seiple, 41.

[11] Seiple, op cit. Chapter Four.

[12] InterAction has created a Web site - www.interaction.org - to facilitate communication.

Appendix A: Civil-Military Relations in Complex Humanitarian Emergency Response: Progress and Problems

Briefing by InterAction

The following slides were presented by George Devendorf, InterAction, at the 18-19 April 1996 workshop on *Humanitarian and Peace Operations: The NGO/Interagency Interface*. This workshop, which was held at the National Defense University (NDU), was sponsored by NDU's Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) Center for Advanced Concepts, Technologies, and Information Strategies (ACTIS). InterAction is a coalition of more than 150 private voluntary organizations (PVOs) engaged in humanitarian efforts. Commentary has been added by the authors of the workshop report.

Slide 1. Title Slide

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS
IN COMPLEX
HUMANITARIAN
EMERGENCY RESPONSE:

Progress and Problems
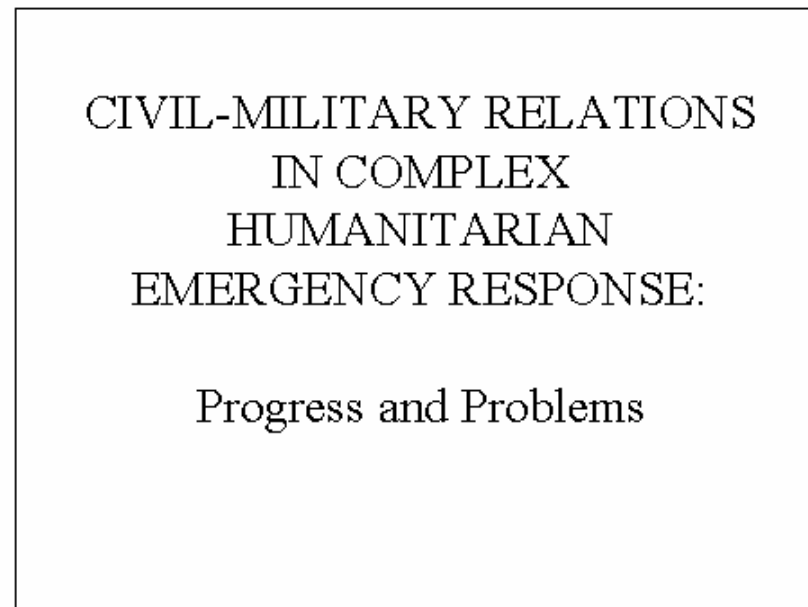
Slide 2. Defining the Players

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

- **The Civilian Players:**
  - United Nations Humanitarian Agencies
    - UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, DHA...
  - International Organizations (IOs)
    - ICRC, IFRC, IOM...
    - NGOs - IRC, World Vision, ADRA...
    - Donor Agencies - OFDA, ECHO
    - Host Government Authorities

Complex humanitarian emergencies involve multiple actors at many levels. In most cases, the host government authority takes the lead in guiding donor, NGO, IO, and UN representatives and activities.

Slide 3. Defining the Players, Slide II

Like the civilian side, military involvement in humanitarian operations is multidimensional. Depending on the situation, the military presence could be multinational, multiservice, regional, or involve multiple parties to a conflict. As the number of actors increases, the situation is further complicated by trying to communicate across different units, interpreting different military insignia, etc.

Slide 4. Perceptions of Authority

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

- Structure

- Organization

- Chain of Command

Because of the diffuse nature of the NGO community, the military often is confused when trying to figure out who is in charge, what organizational structure is present in-country, or how the civilian chain-of-command--if one exists--functions.

Slide 5. Perceptions of Transparency

TRANSPARENCY

- Mission Statements and Rules of Engagement (ROE)

- Peacekeeping? Enforcing? Neither?

- Terms of Reference -- Who's Supporting Whom?

Although the military knows the mission and understands the rules of engagement (ROEs) in peacekeeping operations, its interagency partners also need to be informed about the mission, any change in mission, and the ROEs. For example, U.S. Pacific Command uses a full-time humanitarian affairs advisor assigned to the staff to facilitate the CINC's understanding of the civilian side and to facilitate communication between the military and its interagency partners. In the area of peacekeeping operations, both the military and the civilian side question who is supposed to be supporting whom.

Slide 6. Perceptions of Communication

COMMUNICATION

- Interoperability of Hardware
  - Separate, but Friendly?
  - Liaison Officers at Information Hubs
- Frequency Allocations and Radio Discipline
  - Establish Early On
- Information Management Center

The military, civilian agencies, and the NGOs all recognize the importance of communication among organizations, but recognize that problems abound. The lack of compatible communications hardware hinders effective communication and even the various branches of the military experience problems communicating with each other. The need for secure communications further complicates the situation. While not everyone needs to be fully wired into a communications network, there needs to be one point of contact that has access to all of the communications nets, such as a liaison officer in UN headquarters or a civilian assigned to a military office. Because frequency allocation is a critical problem, it needs to be resolved early in a crisis by working with the host government, who controls the allocation of frequencies. All parties need to ensure that NGOs have access to communications frequencies and that the division of these allocations is consistently enforced. One potential solution to these communications-related issues is to establish a centralized Information Management Center.

Slide 7. Perceptions of Communication, Part II

COMMUNICATION, PART II

- Does Anyone Here Speak Civilian?
  - Civil Affairs Personnel
- Humanitarian Advisors and LNOs
- Standardized Reporting Formats/Language
- Information vs. Intelligence

Part of effective communications between the military and the NGO community is ensuring that each understands what the other is saying. One approach is to collocate civil affairs personnel with the Civil Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) and OFDA personnel with various military commands. Also as part of an effort to "speak the same language," it would be very useful to develop standardized formats for the reports generated by the military, UN, NGOs, etc., in the field so everyone involved in a crisis can correctly interpret the information coming in from the field. A tension exists, however, as to how information is used. The military views NGOs as a wealth of information, but the NGOs are wary of being the conduit of such information lest it be used as intelligence information.

Slide 8. Communicating In-Country

IN-COUNTRY
COORDINATION

- Civil-Military Coordination Structures
  - CMOC/CIMIC
    - Accessible (Outside the Wire, if Possible)
    - Responsive
    - Local
  - Operational Level Coordination

The UN and the NGO community recognize the importance of civil-military coordination structures in complex humanitarian disasters. In order to be most effective, these structures must be accessible to the NGO community, support NGO requests for assistance, and work at the local level. In order to achieve this last goal, a situation may require multiple CMOCs or CIMICs. If the structures are located outside the wire--that is, close to where the NGOs operate and not within the military's security perimeter--this can create communication problems with the associated military headquarters. By working at the local level, however, these structures can be very effective in meeting operational needs, such as food distribution and perimeter security.

Slide 9. Communicating In-Country, Part II

IN-COUNTRY COORDINATION, PART II

- Civilian Humanitarian Coordination Structures
  - HOC
  - OSOCC
    - Host Government Ministries/Authorities
    - Sectoral Working Groups
- Parallel Structures

Coordination within the NGO community is as complex as coordination across NGOs and government agencies. Typically, the UN leads in-country humanitarian coordination, using structures such as the HOC (Humanitarian Operations Center) and the OSOCC (On-Site Operation Coordination Center), as well as working through host government ministries and sectoral working groups that address specific problem areas. In some situations, parallel structures of coordination are established--some are UN, some are military--which complicates coordination.

Slide 10. Understanding Each Other

UNDERSTANDING RESPECTIVE
PRIORITIES, CAPABILITIES, AND
LIMITATIONS

- Force Protection
- Setting the Tone vs. Getting the Job Done
- Flexibility/Decision-Making Authority
- The Resource "Gap"
  - Unrealistic Expectations
  - Rent and Wage Scales
- 911 - The Safety Net?

Differing missions and needs lead to vastly different perceptions of priorities in-country among all the actors. It is important that all the actors understand each other's priorities and needs in order to effectively deal with one another. For example, force protection is a top priority for the military. The humanitarian community does not always understand this priority and hence, may believe that military logistics during the deployment phase should be tailored toward delivering needed supplies to the field and not toward establishing force protection. In all the cases listed in Slides 10 and 11, both the military and civilians need to make clear what is expected of the other and what each is prepared to do and what they will not do.

Slide 11. Understanding Each Other, Continued

....CONTINUED

- Guilt by Association
- Access to Transportation/Logistics Hubs
- Telling the Good Apples From the Bad
  - Validation of NGO Requests
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Stay in Your Lane!
  - Recognizing Unique Capabilities/Comparative Advantages

Like Slide 10, Slide 11 continues to address problems in understanding other organizations' perceptions and priorities. For example, if the military is deciding who should receive certain assets, how does it tell the "good apples from the bad?" In order to prioritize NGO requests and requirements, the military needs to contact the responsible UN agency for its assessments, talk with reliable NGOs, and coordinate with the DART team. This way, it can give support to capable, enduring NGOs and avoid mistakes by supporting "weekend" NGOs--small, fly-by-night operations with limited resources, goals, and effectiveness. Finally, both NGOs and government agencies must recognize that certain organizations--be they NGOs, the military, UN agencies, etc.--may bring unique capabilities to a complex emergency and should perform those functions without undue interference by others operating in the theater.

Slide 12. Transitioning Between A Complex Humanitarian Emergency and Ongoing Humanitarian Operations

TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Sustainability
- Proportionality
    - Potential Disruptions/Disincentives
- Local Capacity Building
    - When Appropriate, Buy and Hire Locally
- Hand Off/Training of Follow-On Forces

Many issues affect the success of an effective transition during which the military exits a situation and turns over responsibility for certain tasks to the civilian sector. The transition issues listed above need to be considered in the planning stages of an operation before the military ever becomes involved. The types and degree of humanitarian involvement need to be assessed early on and potential disruptions to the local economy considered and minimized. If possible, the humanitarian effort needs to engage in local capacity building, hire and buy locally, and leave indigenous capabilities behind. At times, training of forces (e.g., UN) that will replace the current (U.S.) forces needs to occur.

Slide 13. Emerging Trends in Civilian-Military Cooperation

EMERGING TRENDS

- Joint Training
- Joint Planning
- Joint Assessment
- Measurable Objectives
  - Service Packages and MCDA Lists

Positive trends to facilitate better communications, planning, and assessments between NGOs and government agencies are emerging. For example, joint training is occurring more frequently. Moreover, the U.S. Government increasingly recognizes the need to get civilian agencies involved early in planning and assessing situations, including efforts to develop measurable objectives and MCDA (Military Civil Defense Assets) lists.

Appendix B: The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations in Disaster Relief

Sponsored by Caritas lnternationalis, Catholic Relief Services, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, The international Save the Children Alliance, the Lutheran World Federation, Oxfam, and the World Council of Churches (members of the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response), together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Purpose

This Code of Conduct seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. It is not about operational details, such as how one should calculate food rations or set up a refugee camp. Rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which disaster response NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aspire. It is a voluntary code, enforced by the will of organisations accepting it to maintain the standards laid down in the Code.

In the event of armed conflict, the present Code of Conduct will be interpreted and applied in conformity with international humanitarian law.

The Code of Conduct is presented first. Attached to it are three annexes, describing the working environment that we would like to see created by Host Governments, Donor Governments and Intergovernmental Organisations in order to facilitate the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Definitions

NGOs: NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) refers here to organisations, both national and international, which are constituted separate from the government of the country in which they are founded.

NGHAs: For the purpose of this text, the term Non-Governmental Humanitarian Agencies (NGHAs) has been coined to encompass the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement--the International Committee of the Red Cross, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and its member National Societies--and the NGOs as defined above. This code refers specifically to those NGHAs which are involved in disaster response.

IGOs: IGOs (Intergovernmental Organisations) refers to organisations constituted by two or more governments. It thus includes all United Nations agencies and regional organisations.

Disasters: A disaster is a calamitous event resulting in loss of life, great human suffering and distress, and large-scale material damage.

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

1. The humanitarian imperative comes first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognise our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, which is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility.

The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster.

When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs.

Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate.

In implementing this approach, we recognise the crucial role played by women in disaster-prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes.

The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of NGHAs to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions.

We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4. We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy.

We will never knowingly--or through negligence--allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments.

We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor.

We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognise the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5. We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities

All people and communities--even in disaster--possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and cooperate with local government structures where appropriate.

We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs

All relief actions affect the prospects for long-term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognising this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavor to minimise the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies.

All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.

We recognise the need to report on our activities, from both a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness.

We recognise the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance.

We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact.

Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimise the wasting of valuable resources.

10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified human beings, not objects of pity

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears.

While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the principle of maximising overall relief assistance.

We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

The Working Environment

Having agreed unilaterally to strive to abide by the Code laid out above, we present below some indicative guidelines which describe the working environment we would like to see created by donor governments, host governments and the intergovernmental organisations--principally the agencies of the United Nations--in order to facilitate the effective participation of NGHAs in disaster response.

These guidelines are presented for guidance. They are not legally binding, nor do we expect governments and IGOs to indicate their acceptance of the guidelines through the signature of any document, although this may be a goal to work towards in the future. They are presented in a spirit of openness and co-operation so that our partners will become aware of the ideal relationship we would seek with them.

Annex 1: Recommendations to the governments of disaster-affected countries

1. Governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies. This independence and impartiality should be respected by host governments.

2. Host governments should facilitate rapid access to disaster victims for NGHAs

If NGHAs are to act in full compliance with their humanitarian principles, they should be granted rapid and impartial access to disaster victims for the purpose of delivering humanitarian assistance. It is the duty of the host government, as part of the exercising of sovereign responsibility, not to block such assistance, and to accept the impartial and apolitical action of NGHAs.

Host governments should facilitate the rapid entry of relief staff, particularly by waiving requirements for transit, entry and exit visas, or arranging for these to be rapidly granted.

Governments should grant over-flight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief supplies and personnel, for the duration of the emergency relief phase.

3. Governments should facilitate the timely flow of relief goods and information during disasters

Relief supplies and equipment are brought into a country solely for the purpose of alleviating human suffering, not for commercial benefit or gain. Such supplies should normally be allowed free and unrestricted passage and should not be subject to requirements for consular certificates or origin of invoices, import and/or export licenses or other restrictions, or to import taxes, landing fees or port charges.

The temporary importation of necessary relief equipment, including vehicles, light aircraft and telecommunications equipment, should be facilitated by the receiving host

government through the temporary waiving of licensing or registration requirements. Equally, governments should not restrict the re-exportation of relief equipment at the end of a relief operation.

To facilitate disaster communications, host governments are encouraged to designate certain radio frequencies, which relief organisations may use in-country and for international communications for the purpose of disaster communications, and to make such frequencies known to the disaster response community prior to the disaster. They should authorise relief personnel to utilise all means of communication required for their relief operations.

4. Governments should seek to provide a coordinated disaster information and planning service

The overall planning and co-ordination of relief efforts is ultimately the responsibility of the host government. Planning and co-ordination can be greatly enhanced if NGHAs are provided with information on relief needs and government systems for planning and implementing relief efforts as well as information on potential security risks they may encounter. Governments are urged to provide such information to NGHAs.

To facilitate effective co-ordination and the efficient utilisation of relief efforts, host governments are urged to designate, prior to disaster, a single point of contact for incoming NGHAs to liaise with the national authorities.

5. Disaster relief in the event of armed conflict

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

Annex II: Recommendations to donor governments

1. Donor governments should recognise and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies whose independence and impartiality should be respected by donor governments. Donor governments should not use NGHAs to further any political or ideological aim.

2. Donor governments should provide funding with a guarantee of operational independence

NGHAs accept funding and material assistance from donor governments in the same spirit as they render it to disaster victims: a spirit of humanity and independence of action. The implementation of relief actions is ultimately the responsibility of the NGHA and will be carried out according to the policies of that NGHA.

3. Donor governments should use their good offices to assist NGHAs in obtaining access to disaster victims

Donor governments should recognise the importance of accepting a degree of responsibility for the security and freedom of access of NGHA staff to disaster sites. They should be prepared to exercise diplomacy with host governments on such issues if necessary.

Annex III: Recommendations to intergovernmental organisations

1. IGOs should recognise NGHAs, local and foreign, as valuable partners

NGHAs are willing to work with UN and other intergovernmental agencies to effect better disaster response. They do so in a spirit of partnership which respects the integrity and independence of all partners. Intergovernmental agencies must respect the independence and impartiality of the NGHAs. NGHAs should be consulted by UN agencies in the preparation of relief plans.

2. IGOs should assist host governments in providing an overall coordinating framework for international and local disaster relief

NGHAs do not usually have the mandate to provide the overall coordinating framework for disasters which require an international response. This responsibility falls to the host government and the relevant United Nations authorities. They are urged to provide this service in a timely and effective manner to serve the affected State and the national and international disaster response community. In any case, NGHAs should make every effort to ensure the effective co-ordination of their own services.

3. IGOs should extend security protection provided for UN agencies to NGHAs

Where security services are provided for intergovernmental organisations, this service should be extended to their operational NGHA partners on request.

4. IGOs should provide NGHAs with the same access to relevant information as is granted to UN agencies

IGOs are urged to share all information pertinent to the implementation of effective disaster response with their operational NGHA partners.

Registration form

Non-governmental organisations which would like to register their support for this Code and their willingness to incorporate its principles into their work should fill in the form below and return it to

Disaster Policy Department,
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,
PO Box 372,
1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.
Tel +41 (022) 7304222
Fax +41 (022) 7330395

Appendix C: OFDA Role in Disaster Relief

What is the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance?

- Part of the U.S. Agency for International Development, not the State Department
- Responsible for the coordination of USG responses to international disasters
- OFDA's Mission:
  - Save Lives
  - Alleviate suffering of disaster victims
  - Reduce the economic impact of disaster
  - Support Prevention/ Mitigation/ Preparedness & Planning (PMPP) Activities

Origin of OFDA's Authorities

LEGISLATIVE:

- Foreign Assistance Act - Section 491/492

EXECUTIVE:

- The President has named the USAID Administrator as his Special Coordinator for International Disaster Response
- The Administrator has delegated to OFDA specific responsibility for disaster relief

The Process:
When a Disaster Occurs

- US Government (through OFDA) may respond IF:
    1 - Disaster is beyond the ability of the affected country to respond
    2 - Affected country requests (or will accept) outside assistance
    3 - Assistance is in the interest of the US Government

Types of Disasters

- Natural Disaster: Earthquake, Tidal Wave, Cyclone, Floods, etc.

- Complex Emergency: A humanitarian crisis in a country or region where there is a total or considerable breakdown of authority resulting from internal and/or external conflict and which requires an int'l response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency. (UNDHA definition)
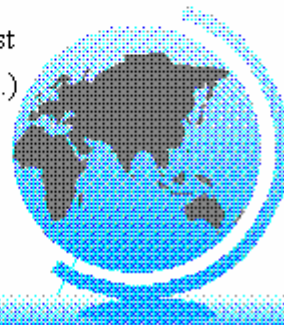
The Process:
How a Disaster is Declared

- ◆ By the U.S. Ambassador in the affected country

- ◆ Ass't Secretary of State for the affected area or region (e.g. Somalia, North Korea) if there is no Ambassador

- ◆ Ambassador notifies OFDA - may request assistance up to $25,000

- ◆ Further assistance requires OFDA review and approval

OFDA Capabilities

- ◆ Notwithstanding Authority
- ◆ "Borrowing" Authority
- ◆ Special Hiring Authorities
- ◆ Cooperators
  - – Other Federal Agencies (CDC, U.S. Forest Service, USPHS, USGS, Coast Guard, etc.)
  - – U.N.
  - – NGOs and PVOs
  - – Other Donor Organizations (ECHO, EMERCOM, ODA, etc.)

The Process:
OFDA Response Options

- Deploy Regional Advisors
- Deploy Assessment Team(s)
- Fund NGO/PVO/IO/U.N.
- Provide OFDA disaster relief commodities
- Deploy Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)
- Combination of the Above

OFDA Response Options:
Provide OFDA Commodities

- Located in 4 main stockpiles & 3 specialized caches: Guam, Panama, Italy, Maryland (Djibouti, Fairfax, Miami)
- Purpose: To pre-position required items near disaster-prone areas to reduce response time and save on transportation costs
- Description:
  - $10,000,000 of disaster relief commodities
  - Resident stockpile managers
  - 20,000-30,000 sq. ft. secure storage area
  - 24-hour/day, 7-day/week coverage

OFDA Stockpile System: Stockpiled Commodities

- Plastic Sheeting
- Tents
- Blankets (polyester and wool)
- Water containers (5 gal. and 3,000 gal.)
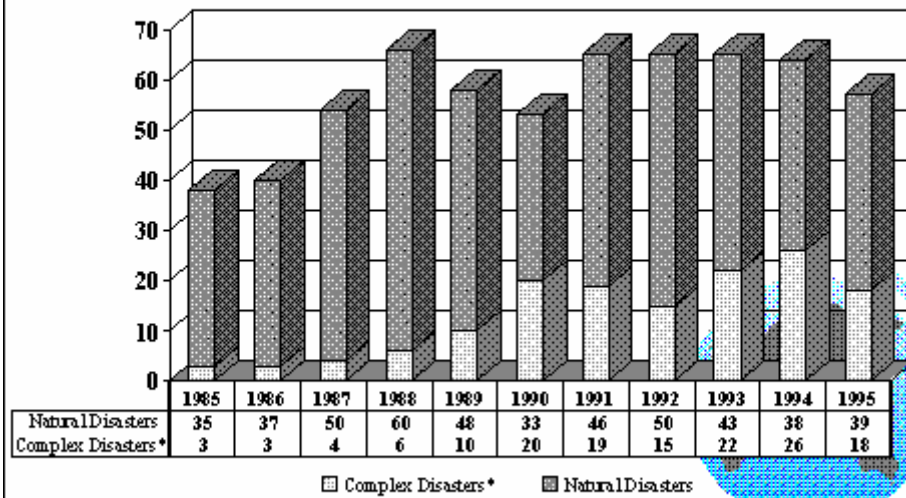- Individual/Intermediate Support Kits
- Hygiene Kits
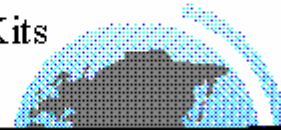
OFDA Response Options: Deploy a DART

- Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)
- A rapid response management team made up of disaster relief specialists which:
  - Assists the Ambassador
  - Identifies and prioritizes needs
  - Reports on situation
  - Recommends response actions
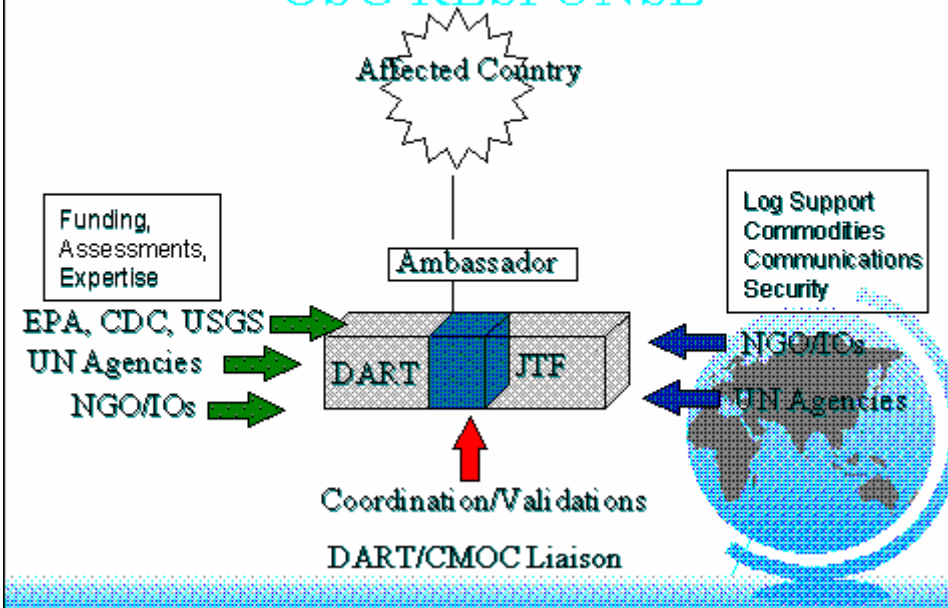 - Coordinates with affected country and other response organizations

Number of Complex Disasters
(FY 1985 - FY 1995)

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Natural Disasters	35	37	50	60	48	33	46	50	43	38	39
Complex Disasters*	3	3	4	6	10	20	19	15	22	26	18

☐ Complex Disasters*   ▨ Natural Disasters

* Includes Civil Strife/Displaced Persons/Emergencies/Expellees/Refugees

USG RESPONSE

Affected Country

Funding, Assessments, Expertise

Log Support
Commodities
Communications
Security

EPA, CDC, USGS →
UN Agencies →
NGO/IOs →

Ambassador

DART   JTF

← NGO/IOs
← UN Agencies

Coordination/Validations

DART/CMOC Liaison

OFDA-DOD RELATIONSHIP

- DOD Directive 5100.46 - Subject: Foreign Disaster Relief
- OSD/SOLIC/Humanitarian and Refugee Affairs (HRA)
- JCS J-4 Logistics Readiness Center (LRC)
- State Department - Political/Military Affairs (PM)
- Liaison at strategic, operational, tactical levels during JTF operations
- Relationship varies with the color of the $$ - OFDA or HRA or O&M
- OFDA has a 1B1 priority for airlift